

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ELECTORAL LAW APPROVED BY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

1. SUMMARY. ANOTHER STEP TOWARD NATIONAL ELECTIONS WAS COMPLETED SEPTEMBER 19 WHEN CABINET APPROVED NEW ELECTORAL LAW OF REINFORCED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. NUMBER OF DEPUTIES REESTABLISHED AT 300, SAME AS BEFORE APRIL 21, 1967 COUP. PRESS REPORTED ONLY OBSTACLE REMAINING BEFORE ELECTIONS CAN BE ANNOUNCED IS PM CARAMANLIS' DETERMINATION THAT CONDITIONS ARE FAVORABLE. END SUMMARY

2. CABINET UNDER PM CARAMANLIS APPROVED SEPTEMBER 19 NEW ELECTORAL LAW WHICH RESTORED VALIDITY OF 1963 ROYAL DECREE PROVIDING FOR VOTING SYSTEM OF REINFORCED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. AFTER INITIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO PARTIES' SHOWING AT POLLS, SECOND DISTRIBUTION OF REMAINING PERCENTAGES WILL BE CONTINGENT ON SINGLE PARTY'S OBTAINING AT LEAST SEVENTEEN PERCENT OF TOTAL NATIONAL VOTE. INNOVATIVE FEATURE OF NEW ELECTORAL LAW IS CREATION OF TWELVE SEATS TO BE FILLED BY STATE DEPUTIES WHO WILL BE SELECTED BY POLITICAL PARTIES WITHOUT INCUMBENTS BEING TIED TO SPECIFIC CONSTITUTENCIES. PARTIES WILL SELECT THESE DEPUTIES IN PROPIRTION AGAIN TO TOTAL VOTES EACH PARTY

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RECEIVED ON NATIONWIDE BASIS. REPORTED PURPOSE OF NEW

FEATURE OF TWELVE STATE DEPUTIES IS TO PERMIT NATIONALLY PROMINENT FIGURES TO OBTAIN PARLIAMENTARY SEATS AND MAY PROVIDE MECHANISM FOR CABINET MINISTERS TO AVOID RESIGNING POSITIONS IN CAMPAIGN PERIOD AS REQUIRED BY LAW TO ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY AS CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY.

3. MINISTER OF INTERIOR STRATOS IN ANNOUNCING APPROVAL OF NEW LAW REMARKED THAT TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES FOR HOLDING ELECTIONS ARE NOW IN PLACE MAKING POSSIBLE CONDUCT OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS. "ALL THAT IS LEFT NOW IS TO ESTABLISH WHETHER OR NOT SUITABLE CONDITIONS AS LAID DOWN BY THE PRIME MINISTER EXIST AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL THEN PROCEED TO PROCLAIM ELECTIONS..." SPECIAL LAW ON POLITICAL PARTIES IS REPORTEDLY IN FINAL STAGES OF PREPARATION AND WILL BE PUBLISHED SHORTLY. QUESTION OF LEGALIZATION OF GREEK COMMUNIST PARTIES IS ALSO EXPECTED TO BE SETTLED IN NEAR FUTURE.
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